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English Language in the Akamba Classroom: Competition and Culture

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE KAMBA CLASSROOM: COMPETITION AND CULTURE

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I. INTRODUCTION

There are many systems of education to be found in our pedagogical world that are designed and instituted to create individuals who, after finishing varying levels of the system, can join the greater controlling society in a membership of productivity. The values and methodologies used within the educational realm for the most part reflect the greater societal norms and are about the business of enhancing and strengthening those already-established norms. While this may be true of a society that has developed its own institutions in an evolutionary pattern to fit those changing attitudes of society, can we say the same thing for one which has endured a period of colonialism and due to the lack of present expertise still operates by and large with an inherited system developed externally based on norms not even distantly related to the dominated society.

To provide a negative response to this question assumes that the individual learner, teacher, planner could not take what is useful from his surroundings and somehow adapt these points to his needs. For a country independent for the past fourteen years, aiming to find

what is truly itself in a multiethnic society, such actions of pick and choose are the rule of thumb. That is to say, for those who have personally freed themselves from their own educational histories and who can rise above the milieu, essential pedagogical questions are being asked with a view toward how one can take what is already there, shuffle in the panorama of cultural beliefs, which are very much in rapid transition, and come up with a system that is indigenously unique and satisfies the political and sociological outlooks of the national government.

Kenya has not had, and will not have for the foreseeable future, an easy task in sorting out her development priorities. The pressures of unemployment tend to make for difficulties in clarity of thinking. While certain practices are seen to be of value today, without foresight, tomorrow the unintended consequences play their whiplash effect and thus provide only greater problems. I see the Harambee school effort as being in this category.

Under the Harambee effort, communities are left to their own to provide schooling at the secondary level where government is not able. While parents and relatives

participate in commendable self-help activities, there is little or no thought as to how the school will be staffed and stocked once it is built. And it is universally accepted throughout Kenya that what will be taught will not in any way differ from the basic classical education provided at one time by the colonialist, regardless of the effects of this type of system on family structure and culture.

The subject of this paper, then, is manifold. To understand where Kenyans are now and where they are struggling to be, we must first know something of where they have been. This entails an inquiry into traditional, non-formal educational practices within a given ethnic group as well as into colonial policies and practices. In that inquiry, I will endeavor to single out certain values and norms transferred from the teacher to the learner in order to provide a background to an analysis of field research undertaken in an actual Harambee classroom situation. These factors will then be utilized to look at the norms and values of the greater society to determine just what of the past has been chosen to be shuffled into the present. From there I can draw some

implications for change that would make the educational system in Kenya more responsive to both the practical and cultural needs of the greater society.

The road I would wish for us all to travel takes us, necessarily, through historical and present practices in order for us to see where it is Kenya is going in the future. The venture will be circuitous, but it will bring us, hopefully, to a greater appreciation of education in a developing country and, if it is our purpose, how we as teachers can humanistically affect change not only for the good of the student, but also for the good of the country.

II. WHERE DID AKAMBA EDUCATION ALL BEGIN?

The ethnic group which is the subject of this paper is the Akamba tribe. A division of Bantus which emigrated from the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania in search of water, the Akamba constitute the third to fourth largest tribe in Kenya with a population as of 1973 at approximately 1,363,809,[1] about two-thirds of which are to be found in Machakos District and one-third in the more sparsely populated Kitui District. Both of these are found east of Nairobi in the central portion of Eastern Province.

Land occupied by this group is essentially dry rangeland that was once very heavily overrun by game. Traditionally, Akambas are hunters; however, with the growing population and diminishing water supply those who were full-time hunters gradually changed to take up more agriculturist/ pastoralist professions, while others took up the art of carving. The kind of acephalous society which developed around these professional groupings is one which is extant today. Authority was not vested in one individual; indeed, it was dispersed in accordance with age groupings, with the eldest receiving the greatest amount of respect because it was they who had amassed a greater body of knowledge.

To understand what elements of Akamba society were paramount in transferring to children in an educational process, let us look briefly at the workings of this society and at what practices were utilized in passing on norms and values.

A. The Values of the Society

Society in Ukambani (name given to the areas in Eastern Province where Akamba live) is structured to reflect a division according to age. (Ndeti[2] gives a

full account of the Akamba age cycle.) With the natural attainment of each level, certain rights and responsibilities are accorded to the individual, although these are more clear-cut for males than they are for females. An individual does not achieve status by personal achievement though. Rather, a man's value is determined by his network of relationships -- beginning with his family and the legitimacy he provides himself by having children. If a man's network of relationships is limited, then it follows that even though his age grade might command the highest level of respect, he himself will not fully enjoy that status because he has not curried the favor of his friends and won their esteem by exhibiting his friendliness or kindness. Thus, a traditional value of Akamba society is the <u>strength and extent of relationships one has with his age mates and others</u>.

Within the primary relationship of the family, the locus where the patterns are first established, there is an authority structure, albeit not rigidly adhered to. The oldest male member is considered as head of the family, with the largest proportion of authority being vested in him. But this authority is not absolute: it could always

be challenged. "Everyone was devoted to his responsibility but had some degree of freedom, especially . . . of criticizing anyone else (even the father) whose operation seemed not in keeping with the family constitution."[3] A second value to be found in Akamba society, then, is <u>respect for authority, but not total, unquestioning submission to it</u>.

The environment itself provided the basis for the emanation of certain other values: because life presented the family with daily tasks, i.e., the acquisition of food, shelter and water, labor was divided among the unit. Women were essentially in charge of the day-to-day management of the home, including the rearing of the children, while men either went hunting, herded the livestock (comprised mainly of goats) or went about their skill professions. Because membership in Akamba society was patrilineal, however, the females were seen to have exchanged certain familial rights and responsibilities in the course of their marriage. While women were responsible for the performance of certain chores in their parents' homes before they were married, in their own homes they became responsible for the delegation of those chores to others. In

other words, marriage precipitated the transition from laborer to manager. Yet, with the male being head of the household, the wife always had an overseer and was ultimately responsible to him. Thus, we have a third value to be inculcated in the educational system -- the sharing of certain rights and responsibilities within certain delineated segments of society, with the ultimate authority figure being an older male member of that segment.

The goals of the society, as it was found traditionally, focused on the creation of the primary relationship of the family. Therefore, the act of marriage constituted one of the major milestones of passage from adolescence to adulthood; the second and final manifestation was the production of the first offspring. Additionally, the act of marriage virtually severed the until-then relationship the bride shared with her parents and siblings from birth: she left her family of creation for that of her husband where surrogate relationships were formed.

Because of this intricately interwoven goal system, it was not advantageous for a female to insult a suitor at any time, lest that person ultimately became the husband and the marriage began on a pillar of resentment.

The possibility of insulting a potential suitor carried through in the practice of night dances where young girls were allowed to refuse a dance request only when the boy was known widely to be of ill repute. A girl certainly had the choice to favor certain boys and to encourage them, but no negative action could be tolerated toward a certain individual unless there was a general concensus of opinion. So, a further value instilled into the youngsters of Akamba society was the taboo against insulting male age mates and potential suitors with the underlying motivation against such action being that the goal of society was to create primary relationships in the form of new family ties.

As the society values the network of personal relationships so highly, it would be detrimental to create strong, demarcating boundaries between one age group and another. It would also be dysfunctional to have a power-based authoritative system of chieftaincy that would precipitate in-fighting and strong competition in the matter of accession. What did stand out was special respect for members of a particular age group. "All people were considered equal in status as human beings.

Children were taught to respect their parents, not out of fear but for social rewards. Parents in this classificatory system comprised all people considerably older than the individual. In return, elderly people treated all children as their own. They were responsible for their discipline even if their real parents were present."[4] Should the natural parents have been seen abusing their child without proper justification, peer pressure would be applied from age mates until the parents learned to treat children appropriately. The absence of authority from an older age-grade member lent greater legitimacy to the pressures exerted by peers. We can then say that a further value incorporated into the learning situation was one of <u>cooperation with members of the same age grade and respect for members of more advanced ones, all this being in lieu of a rigid authority structure which, had there been one, would have precipitated an entirely different set of norms and values</u>.

With these five tenets of culture established as a basis for the Akamba value system, let us now take a look at the traditional process through which children became incorporated into that system.

B. An Interpretation of the Tenets

Basic to the understanding of Akamba education is the philosophy which supported it. While western culture sees man as the controller of nature, Akamba cosmology believes that all too many forces are beyond human control and resignation to these forces leads man to be more in harmony (rather than control) with them. If the underlying tenet of Akamba culture then, is harmony, its institutions will reflect that belief. This seems to be borne out by the above description of some of the tenets of the Akamba value system.

The ever-present cacoon of supporting relationships begins when a child enters the first age grades after he has passed from babyhood and can walk and talk. Up until this time Akamba children have not been sex differentiated and so play as a set of age mates. Upon reaching the age of seven, however, differentiation takes place in order that the non-formal educational curriculum can reflect the places these individuals will occupy with regard to roles in later years.

Age cycles are an integral part of Akamba because it is with your age mates that you begin very early to form

the tight web of relationships that will carry you through adulthood. Before passing to the first age grade after infancy, children have already learned that certain actions are expected of them, and one of these was to not act as a person of the infancy age grouping they just left. Through subtle teasing and the telling of stories adults lovingly imparted the fact that certain activities and actions are appropriate only at certain times, and to transgress in this area would lead to ridicule and embarrassment.

Because harmony was the focal point of culture, Akamba children learned that the byword for action with age mates was cooperation. Though individual competitive events may have been arranged to enhance prowess as a hunter among the boys, when the actual hunt took place a cache was made only through cooperation. If one person distinguished himself in a certain way, parents encouraged their offspring to take a lesson from their peers. So, we may say the learning process was one which very early went against an authoritarian structure; indeed, that its basis was imitation whether of adults or peers, with satisfaction obtained through knowing personally that the

task had been fulfilled correctly. There was little boasting about personal achievements as that might upset the building of relationships in delineating a point of antagonism. When the task was done correctly, all would know about it, so why misplace energy in assuming a boastful attitude?

The notion of authority in Akamba is very illusive and difficult to place upon the shoulders of any particular individual. While it is true that men, especially, who have achieved the final age grade are highly respected and sought after for counseling and advice, in no way are they seen as holders of the final word. In matters of governing, "The Akamba government . . . was a collective responsibility based on the assumption that man is ultimately responsible for the protection of himself and whatever proceeds from him."[5] Akamba fully believed that no one person could act as an infallible model for the rest of society and so no pyramid-type authority structure with one leader at the apex was ever subscribed to. The system of age grading and peer responsibility was seen to override the looking to one person as the authority on all. Knowledge was as diffuse and as dispersed as far as

there were individuals, and no one could claim all knowledge as belonging to him.

However, family structure did make it clear that one person was ultimately responsible for the deeds or misdeeds of that grouping. This person was the eldest male of the family, the father or the grandfather. Because this person was seen as the protector of the unit, he was also ascribed certain rights which his collective experience had given him expertise in handling. Since traditionally men did not marry until the next-to-last age cycle, by the time they were parents they were close to the final age group in which their wisdom and experience were respected. Nthele occurred between the ages of 29 and 49, and it was during this period that heads of household exercised their greatest protective responsibilities over their wives and their issue. In this manner the eldest male was looked upon as the decision maker of the unit, and so young people looked to their fathers for direction as well as sanction.

The practice of young girls attending dances and not particularly discriminating against one partner, except due to bad character, is also reflective of the

qualitatively equal status of each member of an age grade. One partner at a dance as well as one partner for marriage could be just as good as another, were it not for personal preference. Since girls of one grouping were taught the same things it could be said that all girls developed the same skills. By the same method, boys were taught what was necessary to carry out their responsibilities so that one boy possessed the same skill as any other -- only the degree of skill differed. What the deciding factor probably was in the case of marriage was the ability of the boy to pay nqasia or a type of livestock exchange paid to the bride's parents. At no time did a girl want to diminish her worth in the eyes of her peers by speaking out of turn about a prospective suitor as such actions might well mean she might be the last of the crop to be chosen, if chosen at all. And since women derive their particular status through the birth of children within a family bond, it would not behoove her to do anything to jeopardize her desirability.

Age grades did not function in a vacuum; indeed, they were seen as the various groupings of individuals which constituted the clan. Since each clan was founded on the

premise of certain codes, it became the charge of each group to carry out and enforce the codes established by its founding member. As an illustration of how these work: "In the case of a man who beats his parents and mistreats others, his age group could come and punish him. Also, if a father becomes cruel to his grown-up children or a wife, he can be reported to mbae (clan) and he will be punished by his age group. A cruel wife can be punished by the husband's mbae age group or an affinal relative . . ."[6] In this way social control was exerted by the clan, but actual wrongdoings were punished by the action of age mates. Therefore, members of other age grades were treated with respect or with a certain deference accorded to that group, lest an individual be charged with a transgression by his clan and punished by his age mates. With authority both dispersed and localized, the individual felt more responsible for his actions. With each person being potentially both prosecutor and prosecuted, with religious beliefs acting as a control force, the spirit of cooperation dominated Akamba society. How this spirit changed is the subject of a later portion of this paper.

C. Methods of Transfer

It cannot be said that Akamba had any rigid, formal system in which the tenets of culture described above were transferred. However, there were certain practices which Akambas utilized to get their points across in order that their children grew up to be constructive, useful members of society. It is interesting to note that some of these practices are being examined today in pedagogical circles that are exploring the type of individual produced by the type of educational system evolved in the western world.[7] Too little has been said about the affective process of learning, and too much emphasis placed on the cognitive. The nurturing environment of traditional educational systems is now seen as a value, and it is the bias of certain educators that it is only a blending of the cognitive and the affective domains that can produce a well-adjusted member of the society. With that introduction, let us now examine the methods and the circle of affectivity in which Akamba children learned of their milieu and how to function in it productively.

1. Imitation -- Because of the nature of Akamba society and their belief that persons in similar

age groupings to the natural parents and above all represent parent figures, models for behavior were established by any older member of the society. Through a network of affectivity, the child was shown which behavior was acceptable in given situations as well as how to proceed in learning a particular skill. It was therefore through the process of imitating individuals more advanced in age that a youngster acquired his knowledge. In a sense one could argue that a child was an apprentice from the time s/he could discriminate differences in behavior, with such apprenticeships foregoing any theoretical exploration in lieu of being guided practically through the performance of more and more difficult tasks. What was most important in this process of imitation was the affectiveness incorporated into the learning situation. Though the youngster looks to age for authority, that authority figure was not absolute nor unbending; indeed, it was through the knowledge that this figure knows, loves and cares for the "student" that confidence and the will to try out new ventures were developed.

2. Work -- Through the medium of work the learner became aware of the division of labor in accordance

with sex. The tasks allocated to little girls were designed as preparation for the real role ascriptions they would undertake in the handling of home and children, while the tasks allocated to boys would reflect their mature roles as hunters, herders, etc. Again, work projects need not have been assigned by only the natural parents; members of the more mature community might at any time have called upon youngsters to perform certain duties, but such requests would always have been congruent with the ascribed role performances a child must fulfill in his/her maturity. As an instance, very young girls might have been requested to cultivate during planting season as it was the business, generally speaking, of women to cultivate, while young boys might have been requested to tend the herds of an elder to prepare the boy for his adult role to be with livestock.

Responsibility was also an element of this training in work, for to do the job half-heartedly or with total lack of awareness that such tasks were preparations for future full-time activity was to leave oneself open to ridicule and chiding. Such actions would have also labelled the learner immature and unable to cope with the work of

adults, a criticism taken very seriously.

3. Play -- Through the realm of play, the child developed certain skills that were also useful in the realm of work. His/her creativity and imagination were called upon to develop manual skills and cleverness in attacking solutions to problems. Additionally, it was during this play period when children were freer to establish friendly relations with their age mates. And this was the crux of the philosophy of play. Getting to know your age mates at an early stage provided the initial affectivity toward members of your clan. For a group that paid prime attention to the strength of relationships, it was necessary that sufficient time be allocated to foster good will. Therefore, the period of play lent itself to friendly interchanges where both skills and relationships could evolve naturally.

4. Oral Literature -- The feeling of a sense of where you came from and how it was your particular ethnic group believed the way it did was transferred from the older members of Akamba to the younger via the means of storytelling. As with many other traditional societies, oral literature, stored in the minds of the

members of the oldest age grade, provided the basis for the curriculum in morals, history and philosophy of the tribe. Through the bed-time relation of stories dealing with the origin of things, animals, daily life experiences and religious beliefs, children had a growing awareness of their particular place in the order of things. They learned of the importance of certain actions and the relationship of those actions to the clan and tribe as a whole. They learned of the relationship of certain religious practices to the conduct of everyday life, and how one must take care of the cosmological responsibilities as well as the terrestrial. The learner began to discriminate between what was clever action and what was commonplace. And, lastly, youngsters learned of the relationship and interdependence of every living creature so that the lessons of mutual harmony might be inculcated in the relating of one human being to another.

5. Social Ceremonies -- Every socially organized body of people has evolved a unique culture which includes certain laws and customs which are to be obeyed. And it is through the medium of social ceremonies that youngsters gain in their knowledge of just

what is acceptable and what is not. Also learned are the boundary markers one needs to follow to be a proper, upstanding member of the society. As an instance, the practice of holding night dances for boys and girls of a certain age grade in Akamba taught the youngsters the accepted social graces and on what particular footing a male/female relationship could be established. Though girls very seldom married boys of their own age grade, through the exposure that the dances provided girls would learn the most efficient way of enticing a would-be suitor without transgressing any sexual taboos.

6. Formal Teaching -- This style of learning probably played the least important part in the education of the child. It was generally undertaken where certain skills were deemed to be absolutely required, and without the development of that skill an individual could not claim his/her rightful place in society. An example of such a skill would be hunting. Though a great deal of this skill area teaching could be done by imitation, certain elements had to be transferred via the direct method, e.g., how to make arrows, and how to make the poisons into which the arrows would be dipped.

Yet, throughout all these methods of learning, the fact to be borne in mind is that when teacher and student met, they were never strangers. Though complete obedience might have been required in the imitation of certain actions, the fear of recrimination for misperformance was always lessened by the fact that your teacher was a person who knew you and knew your family. Such knowledge in itself provided the basis for the will to want to do well. Without the affectivity provided by personal knowledge youngsters could tend to be alienated and suffer a feeling of lack of responsibility to his/her family and friends. It was during the colonial period that the antithesis of these affective learning environments was instituted in the form of the mission school.

Let us now explore pertinent elements of the colonial experience which might give us insight as to the social changes Akamba went through to provide a background to the explanation of observed characteristics in the classroom today.

III. WHERE DID AKAMBA EDUCATION GO DURING COLONIALISM?

While the focus of the entire traditional educational

system in Akamba was to prepare youngsters to become useful members of a cohesive society, we cannot at all argue that the style of education brought by the missionaries and the colonists sought to achieve the same goal. Indeed, it may successfully be argued that their intention was to break down societal cohesiveness and to replace it by a competitive system leading only to division and the dissolution of strong affective ties.

The interaction of both the colonist and the missionary made for a symbiotic relationship in which, ultimately, the missionary supported the goals of the colonist in providing certain skilled manpower through the type of education the mission schools offered, and the colonist supported the educational endeavors of the mission in terms of fulfilling some of the financial requirements of running schools. To understand the effects of this interaction on both Akamba society and Akamba traditional educational practices, we need to analyze elements of colonialism and missionary work from both historical and sociological perspectives.

A. The Kenyan Colonist

One need not look very far even today in Kenya to

understand the lure it poses to the westerner. The fertile central highlands and Lake Victoria basin provide the promise of agricultural prosperity, providing one is willing to literally put one's back into the land. People displaced by the industrial revolution in England, Boers having just lost a war in South Africa, and representatives of trading companies found the climate in Kenya more than suitable, and the chances for making a new start more than adequate.

Earliest European infiltration occurred in the Fifteenth Century when Portugal embarked upon its period of imperialistic expansion. The port of Mombassa was seen at first as a logical revictualing station for ships on their way to discover riches in India. In time, Fort Jesus was built (1593-1594) and because of the need to grow crops for both survival and stocking ships in transit, the first maize, pineapples, papayas, guavas, peanuts and sweet potatoes were planted. Already prevalent on the coast was a flourishing slave trade instituted by the Arabs. Very often not only slaves were the objects of barter; many Akamba hunters would bring down precious ivory and trade it in return for products of the East.

Essentially this process continued for several hundred years, during which time trading companies and nationals from other European countries joined in. It was not until pressure from missionary societies, specifically in England, was applied to abolish the slave trade in 1807 that the idea of prosyletizing and converting the "heathen" of Africa took on a factor of reality. The missionary zeal combined with the actions of the geographic society in England both gave impetus to individuals to come to East Africa.

Growing interest in Africa on the part of Europeans became a political reality when the Berlin Conference was called in 1894-1895, where both Germany and England established their protectorates. (It must be remembered that the actual fact of colonization came about largely due to the political games played in Europe; the fact that France and Britain were traditional enemies and could not cope with one gaining a greater influence in Africa than the other led Britain to join the scramble early and to make certain agreements with Germany over spheres of influence in East Africa.) Shortly thereafter -- 1895 -- in an attempt to develop the riches of the land,

England began to build the Uganda railway to make the movement of produce and other riches more economically feasible. In approximately 1901 the railway was finished, having cost England £ eight million.

Though the promise of riches never dwindled, the realization of them took longer than anticipated. It was perceived that the best way to make the railway pay for itself was to allow settlers into the protectorate, provide them with ample land, and encourage the establishment of plantations -- all this, of course, at the expense of the uprooting of indigenous populations. At first, this meant the Masai were moved out of the very fertile Uasin Gishu plateau in the central highlands to an area south of Nairobi -- Ngong. This left the central highlands free for European settlement, although the Kikuyu also saw it as a favorable place.

The central highlands offered the settler an ideal climate and more than adequate water for the raising of wheat, tea, coffee and, later, pyrethreum. As plantations grew, more workers were required, but the Kikuyu and other tribespeople in the region saw no value in working for the mzungu (foreigner). What the colonial governing

body then did was to institute a system of taxation whereby a man had to pay a tax on every hut he owned. The only employer available from whom the African could get the adequate number of shillings to pay the tax was the settler/plantation owner.

The colonial administration, as mentioned above, was interested in having the protectorate pay for itself. England had a number of demands being made on her budget at that time, not the least of which was the fighting of World War I. To keep just a tangential interest going in her protectorate during the war, the administration set up both the Executive and Legislative Councils to help carry out governmental goals and to provide for representation of various factors of the ever-growing Kenya settler society. It must be pointed out that not only a number of settlers but also a number of Africans themselves were enlisted to fight in this war, and were promised several rewards when they returned. (It is interesting to note that it was these very Africans who were called upon to fight another nation's war formed the cadre of nationalists who began the early agitation for independence.)

At the end of the war, and after Kenya was formally declared a colony, more settlers arrived. Political influence grew and, simultaneously, Africans began to be vocal about settler encroachment on their land. Though the Devonshire White Paper of 1923 declared that African interests should be paramount, what overrode that declaration was the economic need for the colony to pay for itself. Translated into an action policy, this meant settlers had to grow more, needed more workers, and needed an infrastructure that would support them in their undertakings. To the colonial government it brought about a requirement for lower level civil servants who did not require the salary nor the accoutrements of a civil servant recruited in Britain, i.e., a somewhat educated African who required little else than a small salary. To obtain people with adequate qualifications, the government looked to the second kind of settler -- the missionary -- who was emersed in the task of educating the African toward the goal of conversion.

Though the historical and sociological perspectives of Kenya colony and Kenya independent continue, for the purposes of this paper I have sought to establish the

need for some kind of educational body to supply the administration with low-level manpower in order to maintain its policy of the colony paying for itself. Having established this groundwork, I now turn to a more in-depth presentation of the missionary factor in Kenya and its effects on the culture of the Kenyan and, more specifically, on the Akamba.

B. The Missionary

1. Historical Perspective -- The earliest missionaries to come to East Africa arrived from Germany in the middle of the Nineteenth Century. The first ones to make a substantial inroad, however, were from the East African Scottish Industrial Mission in 1891 in Kibwezi (a town on the border of Ukambani). Akambas were not amenable to the preachings of the Scottish missionaries and by 1900 the mission had closed down and moved into the central highlands. "Very little evangelical work was achieved there and the mission became essentially a supply depot of porters for caravans en-route to Uganda."[8]

Steadily the missionary influence grew until in

1910 eighteen different mission groups had been established with seventy different mission stations between them.[9] Mission stations themselves became centers of activities, not only educational but agricultural as well. Since the colonial policy of self-sufficiency extended to the missionary, the Crown Lands Ordinance, passed in 1902, provided that mission stations could obtain 640-1,000 acres of land, regardless of who occupied that parcel beforehand.[10] In effect, the Africans living on the land became tenants of the missionaries, and oftentimes these people would, under duress, become the missionaries' first converts.

With so many missions vying for the souls of Africans, what was the effect of the interplay? As early as 1904 the government had to impose a three-mile limit between mission stations to establish a spiritual sphere of influence to ward off any ill effects of competition.[11] Clearly, there was as much a scramble for ecclesiastical as well as political spheres of influence in the early years of the protectorate, and this in itself was sufficient to make Africans wary of what the mission stations and missionaries themselves were all about. In

one respect, land, the missionary was no different from the settler:

> They required land for mission stations and industrial activities. They selected stations in the midst of populous districts in the hope of gathering a harvest of souls and sometimes engaged in highly commercialized farming to raise money for expansion. The missionary occupation of the highlands coincided with that of the settlers: missionaries took up land alongside settlers, under the same land regulations, and adopted the same methods of cultivation.[12]

In other respects, they engaged in activities which were more unchristianlike than the colonists:

> These missionaries brought with them suspicions, jealousies and interdenominational rivalry and, as each suspected the intentions of the other, they engaged in a competition that was soon to outstrip their resources.[13]

Although Christian doctrine advocates we are all "one body in Christ", the examples set by the various mission societies cast serious doubts in the eyes of their would-be converts. Ethnic groups who saw no value in rivalry if the goal to be reached was similar were confused by the actions of the missionaries. No wonder that when schools were first opened parents were reluctant to send their children lest their traditional values of

cooperation be totally destroyed.

The interconnectedness of the colonist and the missionary also placed under suspicion the goals of the mission stations. "The government supplied funds and sometimes land, while the missions supplied staff, buildings and some of their own money."[14] The colonial policy of "divide and rule" was also a factor. If in dividing and maintaining the local community under colonialist-created systems of chieftaincy meant that the government could more easily control the populace, then the fact that so many different types of mission groups were allowed to carve out spheres of influence went along with that policy. So, what we see in this interaction between missionary and colonist is joint cooperation of both a practical and a policy level, whereas in the carrying out of their duties, both aspired to create separate and competing forces which would keep each other in tow.

2. Sociological Perspective -- What did the early practices of these groups mean to the people to whom they administered? At first it created confusion among subject peoples, and it was for this reason that the

first converts mainly comprised social deviants, victims of famine, and the curiosity seekers. Oftentimes converts were gotten through the use of coercion and conscription, i.e., the linkages between hut tax, need for shillings, need for work, missionary as employer, no employment without conversion, etc.

The actions of the missionaries alone placed them under suspicion. ". . . the colonists had brought with them new values and aspirations and despite missionary attempts to shelter the Africans from Western materialism, the very actions and mode of life of the Europeans, including the missionaries themselves, seemed to contradict their preaching."[15] This point is crucial to the understanding of the attitudes produced within the educational system instituted by the missionaries.

In examining the various methodologies used in traditional education, one of the most important was imitation. There would be a period of observation in which the "student" in his "laboratory" keenly watched the actions of his model -- whether this be for skill acquisition or role-play transfer -- after which the learner began to try out some of his newly-acquired

modes of behavior. Should the actions of the learner have been found to be in error, gentle coercion or peer pressure told him that his actions were inappropriate. Given this as a primary learning activity, one needn't delve too deeply to come up with the answer as to where the Kenyan learned to be competitive. With both the mission and colonialist mentality of doing things for material gain, and with the translation of that philosophy into the carving up of the protectorate to achieve such gains, the role model of being a stiff competitor became firmly established. Whereas the focus of traditional education was the unity of the group, what the African learned from foreign influence was the diversity of the group as well as the parts' relative inferiority. While traditional educators advocated the preparation of their learners to become useful members of a cohesive society, missionaries served as models of a society divided though all claimed to be reaching for the same goal.

C. Education

The need for education in the early years of the colony was two-pronged: on the missionary side, there

was the need of the convert to know how to read the Bible; on the colonist side, there was a need to stock the lower wrungs of the civil service with Africans so as not to inflate the colonial budget. No matter where you began on the continuum -- literacy-education-civilization-Christianity -- the outcome was the same: local culture was decimated in favor of the economic progress advocated in the goals of both the missionary and the colonist.

The translation of these policies ultimately found its home in the school. While there was an economic need to bring people to the mission station, there was the ecclesiastical need to have these same workers convert. The way began with literacy, and this took place in the schoolroom. At first parents resented the time their children were putting in at the mission station; time which could otherwise have been used cultivating the family shamba (farm). In return, parents expected to be paid for the work their children did on the mission station, and it therefore became necessary for the missionary to convince parents of later rewards. Incorporated into that notion was the idea that the child must excel and make himself appear outstanding among his

peers if he wanted his future rewards to be even greater. The standard of measurement instituted to decide who was the better was the leaving certificate. Thus, the cult of the certificate was seen to be the first measurement of future material gain. There was no place in the curriculum for native traditions to be explored; indeed, what was taught came straight from textbooks used in the United Kingdom and other European countries. Thus, early in the formal educational history of Kenya the pattern for not choosing relevant practices to follow from tradition and not integrating those practices into imported ones was laid down.

It soon became prevalent that one could establish one's authenticity through the cult of the certificate. This posed a problem to many mission stations as some were better supplied with certified teachers than others. Students and parents alike would see the advantage of seeking entrance into a particular religious sect on the basis of the number of passes achieved by students in that sect's school in the sitting of certifying examinations. Again, competition played a key role, for the greater the number of converts a

sect could boast, the better off it stood financially. Additionally, each mission society would play off one group of people against another, allowing only Christians into schools while non-Christians could not participate.

The gains that Africans had access to, however, were limited by the colonial administration. "In interpretation, the wish of the administration was that the Africans should develop to no more than journeyman artisans, well-instructed in religion and morals and in whatever trade had been chosen for them."[16] For this purpose, it was agreed that vocational education should occupy a major portion of the education of the African. Agreement was reached between the colonist and the mission out of the motivation of greater cooperation between the two, but ". . . as the Colonial authorities in Kenya and Britain began to take interest in education and the missionaries began to find it increasingly difficult to finance the school systems they had established, a pattern of co-operation developed in which missions came to depend largely on Government financial support while the State relied on

the missionaries for supervision, management and partial financing of the schools."[17] Yet the alliance was not totally friendly; once each group began to encroach on the other's domain, more and more independent action was taken. The government made certain policy statements in which was reflected the goal of making education for the African congruent with his own practices and adapted to the needs of the local community. Missionary educators, with their personal biases, were not interested in preserving the community, and so defied such government writs. In response, the government issued grants-in-aid only to those schools that followed the vocational trend advocated in their policies.

Africans were caught in the middle; while they saw some value in the acquisition of vocational skills, they also saw it as a means to maintain the patron/client relationship inherent in colonialism. On the one hand, many aspired to the certificate knowing full well that only the best could succeed. "The examination system served two purposes. It controlled both the extent to which Africans could aspire in their academic careers and also the number of such aspirants."[18] On the other

hand, Africans perceived that participating in a vocational educational scheme meant that they would have absolutely no access to higher wrungs on the ladder of achievement. "In a very real sense the failure of practical training among the Africans was the result of the subtle exploitation of the policy of gradualism within the trusteeship as a colonial master plan for the exploitation of her dependencies."[19]

The tempo of unrest began to gather momentum, even though the population affected was small. In response to local demands, the government began to initiate its own educational system. Additionally, as more people were educated to higher levels their ethnicity was called upon to advance others of a like group. Thus, independent tribal schools were set up which reflected an academic bias as a response to the interpretation of vocational schools being a means of keeping the Africans inferior.

Gradually, as these three systems, government, mission and tribal, evolved, the cirriculum in each school began to resemble each other. A Department of Education was realized in 1911 with subsequent

adaptation to the academic demands of Africans. The meeting of these demands ran concurrently with the growing political concern of certain educated Africans who became very vocal -- especially after the waging of two world wars in which Kenyans made a notable contribution in the European and Eastern theaters.

With the expansion of educational opportunity, the early biases against vocational training remained. The curriculum adopted by all types of schools was the same to be found on a like level in the United Kingdom. Though the early colonial government tried to instill a sense of educational worth in the teaching of vocational skills, their very motives for so doing served as a stronger force against participation than any disincentive created in the certificate system of the classical curriculum. The early bias developed by the African against skill training plays a forceful role in the educational system of Kenya today. The years that have transpired since the initiation of African education have served only to make the system more competitive and less responsive to local needs.

Let us now see how these practices specifically

affected the Akamba.

D. The System and the Akamba

Geographical and cultural determinants played major roles in the effect early mission education had on the Akamba. Though Ukambani was the locus of some of the earliest attempts at the establishment of mission stations, after a period of little or no success the stations closed down and moved to Kikuyu areas. Geography made it possible for Akambas to live in their chosen area, with their early wanderings in search for water having given them the ability to survive in arid and semi-arid regions. But climate, as determined by geographical factors, was not conducive to either colonist or missionary settlement. The culture of Akamba, deeply inured in the cooperative process, led many Akambas to reject the practices they saw before them. However, once mission stations found a more amenable environment, around Machakos town, the same push/pull factors of change presented by the missionary began to have their effects.

Akambas are pragmatic people; they see no reason to

change a certain practice unless something better can take its place. It was therefore the appeal of materialism that brought Akambas to school. That is not to say they subscribed to the entire competitive educational system; indeed, where they saw that religious qualifications dictated the availability of desk space in a classroom, Akambas in conjunction with the Local Native Council began their own non-sectarian schools. Though they saw that achieving a certificate meant access to greater wealth (bearing in mind that the Akambas are also traditional traders), the means to achieving that wealth were not congruent with traditional practices.

The upshot of early competitive exposure was a rethinking on the part of the colonial government of the way local chiefs were appointed. (Up to the colonial period, Akambas enjoyed an acephalous society.) At the outset chiefs, theoretically, were chosen from the eldest age cycle, these men being the informal opinion leaders and having greater credability than any other members. When more educated men of younger age grades distinguished themselves on Local Native Councils, the colonial government began taking note of

their growing influential positions. Because communications between English-speaking government officials and non-literate village chiefs always left room for ambiguity and misinterpretation, a desire to install English speakers in the positions of chieftaincy grew. Therefore, a divisive factor in Akamba was created when education became the criteria for appointment to chieftaincy instead of the traditional position in the age cycle. In many instances there was cooperation between the educated and the non-literate, but with the cultural changes education produced, the traditional bonds loosened to fit the needs of the manipulator.

As pragmatists, Akambas saw not only a relatively immediate gain in material wealth through schooling, but also thought of future ramifications of the educational system. ". . . Africans became increasingly aware that education held a key to understanding, using, and possibly even controlling the political and economic systems introduced under colonial aegis."[20]

For better or for worse, the mission group which made the greatest impact in Machakos was AIM (African Inland Mission -- basically Baptist) which was much more

diffuse and less organized than the United Kingdom mission societies who settled in other areas. The presence of AIM made it possible for educational reform. Therefore, although Akamba saw the value of skill training, they also saw through the transparent facade of colonial education policy and were among the first ethnic group affected by mission education to adopt the full United Kingdom curriculum albeit on a very small scale. They believed that it was only through studying the same subjects as their rulers that they could begin to understand them and perhaps use that understanding to overthrow them.

Where Local Native Councils could not exert enough pressure to adopt the academic curriculum paralleled in the United Kingdom, vocational schools carried out their duties in skills teaching and Swahili language. Because this type of school predominated in Machakos the Kambas were left at a disadvantage when the first secondary school -- Alliance -- was opened in which the curriculum was taught in English. As historical theory dictates, where there is a vacuum there arrive those who would fill the void and exploit it to its own ends. Thus,

the Holy Ghost Fathers arrived in Machakos District and established the first secondary school in Kabaa with a full academic curriculum. This act presented a socio-religious dilemma not present in Ukambani when only AIM directed education. At this point an Akamba aspiring to higher education had to convert to catholicism before he was allowed classroom space. What the Akamba had succeeded in doing for several decades by opening their own primary schools, i.e., removing religious qualifications for entrance, became their only means for further upward mobility. The Akamba had joined in the race, and as pawns of the religious network of competition have learned the system until it is now obvious that those in the educational milieu, both teachers and students, survive by the instilled instincts of competition brought by the missionary.

IV. THEORY OF COMPETITIVE AND COOPERATIVE PROCESSES

Before an analysis of the now-present competitive setting in a contrived classroom situation in Ukambani can be undertaken, I feel it necessary to go into a discussion of both the competitive and cooperative

processes as psychological and sociological aspects of human interaction.

A. Morton Deutsch and his Analysis

There are, essentially, two types of competition. One is to strive for something; the other is to vie in a quality. Both of these imply the interaction of two or more people on a plane littered with other emotional factors which, in the process of competing, ramify the outcome of the event into a win/lose situation with those participating feeling they have either gained or lost in their self-esteem. But before examining these probable outcomes, let us look into some of the studies Morton Deutsch[21] has undertaken to understand the variance between the competitive and cooperative processes.

Deutsch has contrived several situations in his elementary psychology classes at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) in which he observed both intergroup and intragroup interaction. He notes four separate characteristics which evolved in the competitive/cooperative continuum which we also can use as the basis for our understanding of the quality of interaction.

1. Communication -- Where group work was affected in his study Deutsch observed that when one group was working against another the intragroup communication was generally open and honest with the true conveyance of relevant information. The intergroup process was observed as misleading or often totally lacking. What is the relevance of this finding? Basically, where a person or group perceives him/itself to be in a competitive process where the route to reach a goal is cluttered with competitive battles of wits, one will find that communications are guarded and give scant information at best. On the other hand, where there is a group dynamic in which two or more are working together for the achievement of the same goal, and they are not pitted against each other for a scarce resource, that is to say where cooperation is the mode of action, more real information is transferred and there is less possibility for a distortion of reality -- more opportunity to qualitatively move forward at a higher speed toward the desired goal.

2. Perception -- The variable of an individual's perception of another in the cooperative group

process was seen to be one of sensitivity to similarities and common interests -- a humanistic, if you will, view of the individual in his own right who shares personal qualities with others as a basis for his membership in human society. On the other hand, those perceiving themselves in the competitive process could only see the other in terms of its complete oppositeness -- as seeing no common basis for understanding and indeed displaying the antithesis of humanism, having ". . . a stronger bias toward misperceiving the other's neutral or conciliatory actions as malevolently motivated. . . ."[22] Clearly, the implications for the type of basic approach to human interactions run amuck when viewed in terms of this variable. Should the basic perception of other individuals always be the I/they dichotomy cast with suspicions of malevolence, can there ever be chance for a movement forward, i.e., can a goal ever be reached, or is the individual always in the process of trying to outwit the other at the cost of reallocating his energy resources toward that endeavor rather than toward reaching his goal. Involved in the perception of similarities is the inherent belief of good will and an ability to reach

out and analyze the characteristics which make people human. The I/us process is contradictory in scope from the I/them because its basic tenets are those of open-minded searching for ways to work in a process that will more efficiently produce satisfactory goal achievement for all involved. While goal achievement may occur based on the opposite dichotomy, goal frustration is more likely because the searcher must sift through his individuals and his information more carefully since his basic belief is that others are out to interfere with his cause.

3. Attitudes Towards One Another -- Continuing on a deeper level the discussion of perception, we encounter the variable of attitude. From the information examined above, we can readily see that the person in the I/us process will be trusting and friendly toward his colleagues. On the other hand, those who perceive themselves in the I/them dichotomy will be suspicious of their colleagues and in its more severe form will exhibit hostile actions toward them in situations of little consequence. Where one would be prone to investigate with a positive objective, the other would regard whatever comes to light with narrowness and inconclusiveness.

4. Task Orientation -- Replete in this entire discussion is the fact that a person or group is working toward some end point and that matters involving the task at hand will be primary. For a person or group who view this from a cooperative standpoint, the task will take precedence and the goal will be reached by mutual effort and persuasion. At no point does duplication of effort become necessary because relationships are based on trust and an ability to see one's part in reaching a mutual goal. The end result could be satisfaction in achieving a result which many have worked on together in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation, whereas those who participated in a competitive process will more than likely experience feelings of superiority or inferiority depending upon how able they were to objectively analyze the inputs they had and how efficiently they could be correlated with other inputs to reach a solution. Since relationships are based on distrust, there is necessarily the duplication of effort and the redundance of "busywork" that is counterproductive. Many sub-goals dealing with how to sift through information and how to test the reliability of people will deploy

energies in the direction of coercion, fear, dependence, etc., so that the reaching of the solution can often take a subordinate position. The issue no longer is the task but becomes interaction problems and information shortfall.

B. Paradigmatic Problems

In setting up a paradigm or pattern for analysis it is generally true that one tends to see one part in terms of its opposite; that there is only the "pure" definition of the terms and that when analyzing situations as they are found in real life the "purity" is often lost in other patterns of interaction. And though one may find a group or individual in either a competitive or cooperative process, there are invariably elements of both mixed in either side.

What I consider the most basic element in the theoretical discussion of competition and cooperation is perception, and that a situation needn't be objectively competitive or cooperative but the individual need only perceive that it is one or the other. Without dipping too far into a field in which my expertise is limited, let me just say that the predisposition of an individual toward perceiving a situation in a certain way can be

culturally determined. And yet, there is room for that individual to distort reality based on his own precepts and his own experience. Those who perceive the life process as the exclusive domain of struggle against the elements will invariably meet most situations with a competitive predisposition seeing the self as being able or unable to meet the challenge. The inadequacy of the self to meet changing situations will produce a loss of self-esteem which will, in turn, cause feelings of greater inadequacy and anxiety when trying to rise to the next challenge. Further, a whole host of defense mechanisms are triggered once esteem levels of the self begin to drop and the syndrome can find no way out except to deepen levels of anxiety and inadequacy until no action becomes the best action.

An individual or group may attempt to assuage feelings of anxiety by exhibiting attitudes of aggression. In being aggressive and asserting an air of authority and control one can appease oneself into thinking one is adequate and can satisfactorily accept challenges. If success ensues from the assertion of aggression then it would be more than likely that that

will be the basic tenet underlying the pattern of interaction for that individual. Nye, among others, believes this pattern is set early in childhood where the personality traits and individual characteristics of the parents set the paradigm for development.

> Parents who are overly strict and demanding, and who threaten to withdraw love for behaviors they judge to be unacceptable, may cause their children to develop a fairly rigid and uncompromising view of what is acceptable. A further consequence may be that the child, and later the adult, will suffer anxiety from thoughts, feelings, and actions that do not accord with the overly idealized self-standards he has developed.[23]

Thus, parents, or parent-surrogates can and do set patterns for behavior by placing the child in a competitive process very early. The withdrawal of love or acceptance would be the first cause for anxiety with the loss of self-esteem and aggressive tendencies to ensue. Should the various cultural settings a maturing adolescent subsequently finds himself in, include the same kind of acceptance/rejection patterns earlier established, it would follow that the individual as well as the society would adhere to the I/them principle of viewing the world.

If this be so in a "pure" case of theoretical analysis, then what is left is to actually examine the dynamics of a real situation. How does the paradigm fit; where can we see evidence of the "pure" case in point, and where does culture interject its own notions for dealing with an anxiety-laden situation?

V. THE AKAMBA, THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM AND CULTURE

A. Introduction -- A Town Profile

The setting for my field research is Kathonzweni, a town of about 3, 000, located in lower Makueni -- a distance of about 120 miles through the mountains from Machakos town in the Eastern Province of Kenya. It is a market town, with men and women coming from all over the district to sell their wares every Tuesday. The road was originally built under the auspices of the Aga Khan as owner of the Nation newspaper. It is currently kept in fairly good repair by the Ministry of Works, and except during the rainy season, provides fairly reliable access to the more metropolitan centers of the country, e.g., Machakos and then Nairobi. However, because the bus fares are rather high (15/60 or approximately $2.00 one way) most people stay at home, tend their shamba (farm)

and buy their requirements on market day. There is a visiting nurse twice a week from Wotė (about fifteen miles away) and there are plans to build a permanent dispensary. The catholic church has built a rather splendid edifice for the location, and an Italian priest now resides in a home complete with indoor plumbing and generated electricity. Water comes from a bore hole, the pump for which is in a continual state of disrepair, and from rainwater cachements built on to the corrugated metal roofs of some houses. Otherwise water is hauled in debe (gerry cans or gourds) by women from an earthen dam about two miles downhill from town. The occupation of most of the inhabitants is subsistence farming, with a handful of primary and secondary school teachers as well as shopkeepers and a few people from various ministries stationed in rotating shifts throughout the year.

This part of Ukambani is extremely dry, and at the time of this study (September-December 1976) it had not really rained for four years. Though fairly modern methods of scientific agriculture (terrace farming, use of tractors, manuring, etc.) were used widely, the problem

of water procurement was paramount. The catholic church, in cooperation with USAID, distributed famine relief legumes in return for harambee (volunteer) work in the community, e.g., building bricks for the dispensary or for the girls' dormitory at the secondary school, etc., but this was not done with great regularity and often there was insufficient grain paid for work done even though stores in Wotê were bursting at the seams.

As for history, in 1953, during the time of the Emergency (Mau Mau uprising), Kathonzweni was the site of a detention camp, with the present-day secondary school buildings acting as the main detention compound. This was when the bore hole was dug and when the water tank (that now operates as the only water source for school and students) was built.

Geographically, it was an area where rhinos thrived. Around the time of the building of the detention camp, the colonial government went through a systematic clearing effort to rid the area of rhinos and make it suitable for settlement.[24] Many rivers flowed past the town and it was then deemed as highly productive farm land. However, in subsequent years, with the ensuing

droughts, people became somewhat disillusioned with what the land could produce. Having spent perhaps their life savings in acquiring a new shamba in Kathonzweni, however, meant that whatever the exigencies of the weather, people had to remain because there were no funds to go elsewhere.

To go into the political structure of the town would not benefit the analysis of the present research. Let it suffice to say that the town had its bwana mkubwa (big men) as well as it had its followers. The church (mostly the catholic, although three protestant denominations were represented) and the secondary school were the leading institutions of the community and were looked up to as code-setters and decision-makers in terms of setting patterns of acceptable behavior.

B. The Akamba and the Cultural Milieu in the Classroom

The traditional pattern of Akamba education has already been discussed above. But with every system there is both a formal and informal component: for the formal, we look at the structure as it relates to the function; for the informal, we look more toward the

sometimes off-hand manner in which people acquire knowledge.

The formal structure of my Kathonzweni Form II English class was one based on authority with the teacher lecturing from the front of the class, students copying notes as written on the blackboard or as dictated by the teacher. At no point in the history of the class had students been called upon to be responsible for their own learning. Knowledge was bestowed upon them by the "knowers" (teachers) and students were to look upon both the gift and the giver as something near-to-sacred. This idea evolved during the period of colonial occupation where not only outdated pedagogical methodologies were utilized but the personalities of semi-qualified teachers tended to rely upon an authoritative presence in the class. The atmosphere of the class when I took it over was one of semi-controlled fear. Previous and present teachers were hard disciplinarians and as a result the arrival of any new teacher brought about serious trepidation until the student understood the new teacher's ways. Having been trained in humanistic teaching methodologies made it difficult for me and my class to readjust our expectations of each other. This occurred

in the individualization process.

As to the informal structure of my classroom much more can be said. The only culture represented by members of the class was Akamba; that is, all of the student body in Form II North were members of the Akamba tribe. This acted as both a scourge and a blessing; the latter because of the common first language background and the former because it created an arena where experience was limited and certain cultural characteristics played very important roles.

In the rapidly changing Akamba culture, males are assuming a more dominant role, especially in the formal classroom situation. Although males were the first to be enrolled in schools, females followed several years after. After proving their abilities by passing the primary school leaving exam, females had the opportunity to continue their education in secondary schools as well, provided their parents deemed it worthwhile to invest the fees in the education of a girl. I say invest because a return could be realized by the girl's parents in the payment of dowry. However, in many instances primary school was sufficient to earn a higher bride

price; the achievement of education at a higher level could make a girl "crazy" and men could consider such a girl undesirable. Since it is still of primary importance for an Akamba girl to be married, it is necessary for her to be very careful in the upper grades, being sure not to impinge upon the knowledge domain already carved up by the males.

Aspiration levels of schoolgirls in Kathonzweni do not go beyond occupations specifically reserved for women -- teaching, nursing or being a secretary. To aspire to anything greater is to place one's self in the undesirable range as far as marriage and a future is concerned. The boys, of course, have no such limitation, and with their assumption of the role of authority in the class it is they who develop very high aspirations yet rarely have the mental accuity to achieve them.

In having assumed this position in the formal classroom, Akamba males perceive themselves to be the "winners" of their society. Having a history of that position since formal education began in Ukambani, a great sense of pride has developed. However, as with many who have experienced such a peak position, the feelings of pride

without challenge have developed into superiority which in turn has become excessive. It is this excessive pride which drives the male students to an ingrained need to be first. What this leads to is derision on the part of the superior against any who try to reach that same position, for those who are on top both covet and protect their positions. And in Kathonzweni they do so not via any contest of wits but via the utilization of certain cultural characteristics. Instead of using the examination as the equalizer between males and females in the classroom, subtle pressures exerted by the males upon the females made the latter unable to function at their full potential. That is to say, males called upon their culture to diminish any competitive attitudes exhibited by the females. If females were too "smart" they were derided and teased in such a way that they knew their own chances for finding a mate among their classmates had dropped considerably. Although education in its formal sense has made changes in Akamba culture, a female still sees her identity as tied to that of the male she marries and the children she bares.

This, then, was the situation in Kathonzweni as I

perceived it. What remains is the description of an attempt to "equalize" the classroom and to foster a spirit of cooperation to give everyone that needed a chance to develop their own potential and to institute practices which would fly in the face of those unspoken cultural actions which formed a network of social control.

VI. INDIVIDUALIZATION -- A BRIDGE BETWEEN COMPETITION AND COOPERATION

A. A Theoretical and Practical Rationale

Earl Stevick has offered a very fine analytical framework for understanding second language acquisition.[25] Because I find this outline particularly useful in looking at the language learning process in Kathonzweni, it will be utilized here to establish the theoretical rationale for individualization, although Stevick uses this same mode of analysis to reach somewhat different conclusions.

1. Pronunciation -- Stevick asserts that near-native pronunciation ability is a psychologically-motivated achievement which depends on self-concept and groups with which a person identifies. In establishing his identity, a person, either consciously or subconsciously, is evaluating himself in terms of who he thinks he is: "I

must know who I think I am and who I think I am not; seeking or rejecting closer ties with various groups is one way in which I verify and maintain that image of myself; how I use language is one way in which I communicate my desires relative to those groups."[26] It is Stevick's contention that the particular classroom subgroup in which an individual perceives himself to be will best be reflected in the quality of pronunciation in which there is less of a conscious choice involved, i.e., "rhythm, voice quality, precise vowel quality, etc."[27]

I wish to further elaborate on this aspect of voice quality; when listening to response patterns exhibited by either males or females in my Akamba-dominant classroom, it is evident that as a group males take on one attitude and females another (with the exception of students who do not adhere strictly to cultural norms based on sex.) Generally speaking, a male respondent will stand immediately when called upon, look squarely into the teacher's eyes, and answer in a clearly audible voice. The females, on the other hand, will exhibit the opposite: they will be hesitant in lifting themselves from their

seats; they will focus their eyes on anything but the teacher; and in responding, their voices will be almost inaudible with the answer requiring repetition.

One interesting phenomenon is the exception found to this general rule. Those members of the class who, if female, do not clearly identify with their sub-group, find it very uncomfortable when they are called upon to respond. For them the manner of response presents a dilemma in choice: should they answer in accordance with what they know, or should they exhibit the behavioral characteristics of their sub-group. Oftentimes I could see that these individuals did not want to be called upon, and at first this presented a curiosity to me. However, after seeing the quality of their work when doing exercises with them individually and after learning more about Akamba culture I could understand the particular hardships that the members of this particular sub-group faced. Students who chose to be a part of this sub-group also exhibited certain psychological norms in their patterns of pronunciation and these represented more of a blending of the two more dominant sub-groups. It was evident to me that it was precisely these

individuals who did not want to participate in the competitive roles which had been established with the males assuming the superior roles and the females the subordinate. They merely wanted to get on with their work with as little interference as possible. That interference was defined as having to choose between being honest in exhibiting what they knew and disidentifying themselves from their sexually prescribed sub-group, or going along with the established behavior pattern.

Such dilemmas were clearly detrimental to the learning process and made for an outward exhibition of regression of learning as well as visibly psychological discomfort. I decided without this environment there may be more individuals who wanted to be a part of the third grouping but who did not have the fortitude or the attitude of cultural rebellion strong enough to cross over. Individualizing made that choice easier for many.

2. Drills and Exercises -- Though Stevick goes into a fair amount of detail relating the use of the language drill to the ego states expressed by Berne,[28] he only tangentially refers to the entire situation as an authoritative one in which the teacher is in entire

control. While he suggests ways in which the adult can be elicited in the drill situation, what I conclude is that the whole situation could be viewed as a game of "Authority". This is especially true in educational situations where teachers are deemed the "knowers" and students are always deemed to be in a subordinate role and the whole "game" is to reinforce those positions. Within the subordinate groups there are subordinate sub-groups in which a parallel game of "Authority" is played along the lines of culturally prescribed norms. In the drill procedure within this framework the student plays the role of the compliant, adaptive child toward the teacher, but in turn taken on the dual role of the child who ". . . is interested in comparisons, and particularly in establishing that 'Mine is better than anyone else's'",[29] and the authoritative adult role in pointing a finger to cultural subordinates when it is their turn to respond.

Therefore, in my view, the entire drill procedure is such that it is conducive only to negative learning because the student is always in a contrived situation in which he must perform. Although he may take pride in his integrative ability to utter a correct response, the

ultimate or even ulterior reward in this situation is given by the teacher; and the negative reinforcement for cultural subordinates comes when an incorrect response is elicited and those who view themselves in a culturally authoritative role exude their superiority.

The game "Stupid" which Stevick describes[30] has its hayday in the drill situation where there are subordinate sub-groups within the classroom. More often than not, when an Akamba girl is called upon to respond, this game is played to its ulterior rewards coming from the boys in the class. By virtue of my being a teacher in this kind of subconsciously structured classroom, I fell into the role of authoritarian parent in which I too played to the ulterior reward of negative reinforcement. It took no small amount of pondering to see and understand the dynamic of the classroom, and once understood, to know the proper next step. Again, the best alternative I could contrive was that of individualization in order that child ego states could not be aired and that the psychological art of gamesmanship was not a part of the learning invironment.

A more fitting endeavor that would help to break

down the cultural barriers in the classroom is the device Stevick describes as the "Paired Interview". In such an undertaking students can be teamed up in twos and must ask each other about themselves. Then one must introduce the other or report certain significant facts which the other member of the team has told about him/herself. While on its face, this exercise might do well to serve as a mechanism to get boys to actually listen to girls and to learn something significant rather than to merely prattle in sexualbound tete a tetes. However, it is quite possible within such an authoritative structure as the Kenya educational system that students would not know which questions to ask to learn about each other.

This latter point became clear to me when I did an exercise utilized in psychosynthesis[31] in which students were required to pose the question "Who am I?" to themselves twenty-five times and each time write down the response. It was somewhat disturbing to me to see that very few could go beyond five or six responses, sticking mainly to tribal and physical characteristics. Many apparently felt there was nothing special about themselves and so had no idea how to answer the question in

depth. The results of this exercise led me to believe that students, way before they reached Form II, were so conditioned to rote learning that even to quietly and privately ask themselves about themselves was way beyond their abilities. Questioning is not a part of their learning behavior, and since so much of their behavior outside the school environment is prescribed, there is little if any room in their daily routines to pose questions, especially about who they are and how they fit in the different environments in which they find themselves.

3. Psychodynamics and Language Learning -- Continuing with Stevick's terminology for analysis, the educational system in Kenya, so much like the former colonial administration, can be viewed as the "Controlling Parent" -- the one in authority who is constantly shaking a warning finger. Within this society the "Natural Parent" comes out only when a child is at the toddler stage; but it is very soon thereafter that role prescriptions are instilled and the division between who is to be a leader and who a follower is made. This pattern is followed not only in the classroom, but in the entire educational system.

Throughout the period of formal education the student is pitted against the "Controlling Parent" (in this case the Ministry of Education and its rules and regulations) in his ever-failing attempts to gain acceptance into the system. It is only by following the prescribed schema for success that the system as well as the social hierarchy of the educational institutions can be "won over".

The Ministry of Education -- the "Daddy" of the "Controlling Parent" -- has set forth criteria for success in the setting of exams which students take at the end of primary school (Certificate of Primary Education), Form II if the student attends an Harambee secondary school (Kenya Junior Secondary Examination), and Form IV (East African Certificate Examination). For each level there is a prescribed syllabus which will neither provide the student with tools for analytical thinking nor will they pretend to prepare a student for any form of gainful employment. If the prescriptions are met throughout and the student successfully competes with the system, s/he is still defeated when met with the task of finding some kind of employment. All too often one finds Form II leavers employed by Wazungu as houseboys/girls while

their real talents and abilities might have been channelled into something more promising and relevant had the proper learning environment been made available.

The defensive orientation that this entire learning situation has inculcated can do nothing but produce abject followers of authority. With Akamba culture in transition, from the time a child is small, a girl is taught to be obsequious to her father and to fear him while a boy shares a more exalted position in which he is more free to do as he pleases. This pattern is continued in the primary school where so many untrained teachers who know nil about the psychological needs of the child teach in the manner in which they have been taught; that is, with unreproachable authority that is wielded by having a cane close at hand. An extreme case of misusing such authority can be seen by the number of offspring produced by primary school girls. Their subjugation to the incorrigible sexual whims of their male teachers can do nothing but produce a submissiveness which can lend nothing to the idea of productive learning. In secondary school it is this attitude of submission to authority which is finally and painfully

drilled into their very beings until they give up and fail.

But what of the males in this situation? What is the psychodynamic of their mode of learning? Can they truly say they have come away from the system with some useful, productive tools for carrying on their lives? I think the answer is clear. For when a child is taught in the home to fear those in authority and that same fear is transferred from the father to the surrogate found in the classroom learning can only come out of fear of that authority. And I do not mean learning in its productive sense, but in its defensive sense where material is memorized only to be regurgitated when the student is called upon to respond. Such learning is for short term purposes only and provides no basis for analytical thinking.

Stevick speaks of the teacher and his/her influence in the classroom. The psychodynamic involved in the relationship between my female students and myself, and my male students and myself was so clearly based on the type of relationship students had with their mothers that behavior on the part of some students I knew well

was highly predictable. Females would more readily identify with me out of the classroom where the environment of competition with the boys was not present. In the classroom where I represented the controlling authority figure the relationship was much more stiffly guarded. With the boys in the class, it was plain to see which ones had respect for their mothers as it was they who took delight in friendly conversation outside the classroom. However, it was the boys in whose homes the mother was denegrated to subjugation in favor of the father's whims who did not respect the manner in which I chose to structure the learning environment, as to them all females were not to be respected. It was they who insisted on my placing myself in front of the class and lecturing; in individualizing this entire structure toppled over and these students found themselves unable to cope. Left to their own authority with the choice of what to do next, they were unable to focus on what it was about the English language which required more attention and what it was they had already mastered. For mastering was to be determined by the administration of a test -- set by the authority figure -- and realized in terms of

an order of achievement viz-a-viz the rest of the students in the class.

Well, in light of all this data and in light of the fact that I wanted to do the best possible teaching job I could, I decided to individualize my English language classroom. My motivations for doing so were as follows:

1. The learning environment was obviously slanted in favor of the acceleration of one classroom sub-group (males) at the expense of the second group (females).

2. There was a great variety in ability and competency levels in which certain individuals felt comfortable in prior mastery of materials while others obviously needed more practice.

3. Practice testing for the KJSE needed to be undertaken to give the students experience in answering the type of questions posed.

B. Method of the Experiment

In order to determine where the strengths and weaknesses of each of my students were, I set out two

different writing assignments and marked them in accordance with the type of error they made; e.g., prepositions, misplaced adverbs, dangling modifiers, verb tense, spelling, etc. I kept a roster of mistakes made, and that information coupled with notes I kept on oral performance provided the basis for dividing the class into working groups.

Individualization might be a misnomer in the way I divided the class, for what it actually boiled down to was teamwork on certain grammatical problems, although not everybody was working on the same problem at the same time. For efficiency, I grouped the students into teams, gave each team a color with which to identify, and then provided any number of exercises which targeted that particular grammatical problem:

RED -- Reading Comprehension (reading passages, vocabulary, questions and answers on passages)

GREEN -- Grammar (noun/verb agreement, mass/count nouns, collective nouns)

BLUE -- Grammar (punctuation, sentence structure)

YELLOW -- Composition (controlled, outlines, close procedure)

PURPLE -- Grammar (idioms, prepositions, adverbials)

ORANGE -- Grammar (verb tense, articles)

In my instructions I said they were to check each other's work and that before they consulted me on some point they should ask their fellow team mates. However, these latter two points proved, at the outset, to be more than they wanted to acknowledge in the abilities of their fellow students. So, at first, I still held my authoritative position when it came to marking and answering questions of clarification. When questions were asked, however, I had all team members stop what they were doing in order that all might participate in the discussion. In this way I did not have to duplicate my efforts with those who caught on and I could spend more time with an individual who was hard-pressed to understand.

After completing a set of exercises, the students handed in their exercise books for marking. When they did display their mastery of the particular problem in writing, the student and I sat down for a brief conference in which he further displayed and discussed his mastery of that point. I then assigned the student to another team and the mastery of yet another topic. Usually the time spent on each team varied between

two-four weeks.

I might add at this point that since the students badly needed practice in answering KJSE questions, most of my exercises were taken directly out of a KJSE review book. Other exercises were found in the books used in the English Syllabus for Kenya Schools -- Practical English 1-5 New Edition, by P. A. Ogundipe and P. S. Tregidgo (published in London by the Longman Group Limited, printed in 1972). Still others were taken from Learning Through Language, R. H. Isaacs (ed.) (Dar es Salaam; Tanzania Publishing House, 1976). And others I produced to meet the remedial needs of each team.[32]

When test time was just a week away I disbanded the teams and instituted a series of mock exams in which all the work we had been practicing was utilized. We then went over the exams together in class not only to see how well they did, but also to see how best they could utilize their study time before the actual day of the exam.

C. Results and Unintended Consequences

My pedagogical expectations on the outcome of this

methodology were substantiated by the progress I saw being made by most of the members of the class. However, there were certain very unexpected things which occurred which, in fact, had nothing to do with the formal content of the learning environment.

When I at first explained what I was doing with the class and why, my plan was met with immediate hostility by some, reluctant compliance by others, and affable compliance by yet others. I expected this for the reason that the examination was a very short time away and any disruption of the traditional system they thought would bring about certain failure. However, there were those who played the "Authority" game and reluctantly or affably they went along with my directions.

Once established in their teams, almost all were confused by what was expected of them as not once before had they had the responsibility of making the choice of which assignments were to be done. I explained that they were to look over the variety of exercises and to choose those that presented a viable challenge to them -- that they were to decide what they already knew and what they needed additional practice in.

This basic assignment of choice presented a formidable challenge because no one in authority had previously told them what they had mastered. Their own personal records were a set of numbers which they had collected as marks which in no way reflected their abilities on a certain point. I therefore decided to let them flounder with the exercises for awhile until they got the idea that there were some points they understood completely and others about which they didn't have a clue. Though this was time-consuming, I felt it a necessary step in having them understand personal responsibility for learning, as this is one of the values I wanted them to appreciate from the individualization process in addition to pointing out that it was the most efficient way for them to learn.

After the momentum of the classroom experience established itself, I felt there were some valuable lessons being learned. Those who caught on rather quickly were content to get on with the business at hand. Those who needed extra assistance felt confident in their posing questions to me on a one-to-one basis. No longer did they need to feel threatened nor wasteful

of anybody's time. They were made to feel that I was there at their disposal to answer any question or to clarify any point which was unclear. In this way they were made to feel that I was completely with them individually in their personal process; indeed, that I was so interested in them and their progress that I would spend quite a bit of time with them alone explaining, gently coaxing and in general working on the confidence-building aspect of teaching that was so obviously missing in the formal, authoritatively structured traditional Kenyan classroom.

Because many of the language learning problems of certain sub-groups of the class were culturally enmeshed with the authoritative conduct of the class, when small groups were formed and as I worked with individuals and small groups, the threat imposed by the learning situation was removed. This was evident especially in the case of the female members of the class.

During the period when the class was not individualized the behavior of the girls was reticent and withdrawn. However, once their own expertise did not have to be exhibited and act as a put-off to the boys, they became much more bold and allowed themselves to be right! I

don't know if a similar outcome would have ensued had the teacher been a male, but the fact that I was a female, spending time individually with them, and able to understand their cultural position and empathize with it, they produced work which they were not able to previously. In short, they invested themselves in their work in order that they really did learn.

The progress made by certain of the males of the class, unfortunately, did not parallel the jumps made by the females. Those who perceived themselves as in the authoritative role no longer had a group to preside over when I individualized. The arena for public exhibition had been removed and there was no body over which to exert control by subtly calling upon cultural innuendoes to subvert the female population. It was they who constituted my greatest learning difficulty. To my own dismay, I had to call upon their notions of authority in order that they could learn as well. I had to challenge their ego to get them to produce, i.e., when giving this sub-group an exercise I also had to add a comment to the effect "do this -- if you can". Probably because the affective accoutrements that went with the

traditionally-structured classroom played the major role in whether these people learned, they were unable, quickly enough, to sift through these in order to realize that they could also learn in an individualized situation once they had given up their notions of superiority.

The third sub-group, those who did not care to play the cultural game but who wanted to just go ahead and do their work, made the biggest strides. Also, many who had been on the borderline of compliance with one of the other groups decided to cross over and join the ranks of those who really were task oriented and interested in doing their work. They were able to free themselves from the binds of culture to get on with the business of learning.

D. Discussion of Results Based on Deutsch's Analysis

1. Communication -- Prior to individualization communication between students was qualitatively (in terms of subject matter) very low. Aside from the fact that an authoritatively structured classroom demands silence, students never thought it worthwhile to confer on English points, believing that everybody probably

knew the same thing. Additionally, with the keen competitive situation in the classroom, based on a rank ordering at the end of each marking period, students were covetous of what they knew and so were unwilling to share and learn from each other. Multiplying these factors was the notion that the only person a student could learn from was the teacher -- a "knower".

While I don't believe the individualization process took care of all these problems, it did offer students an alternative way of thinking. Working in teams with desks arranged in small circles (originally arranged in lines) made for a physical setting of sharing -- people could see what their team mates were doing, and the face-to-face set-up provided for an ease in quiet talking when one got stuck. This arrangement also facilitated my mini-lectures when a point was not understood. However, when I was busy with another person or group and could not move to another group to meet their needs immediately, the most natural thing for the students to do was to talk with each other. The fact that I refused to rank order them -- because if an exercise was not done well they could do it over -- also helped them see the

value of sharing.

2. Perception -- Students in Kathonzweni Harambee know full well that they are participating in a long, extremely competitive process. My Form IIs were acutely aware of this as the KJSE acted as a winnowing out mechanism -- those who passed would go on to Form III and IV, and then EACE. Those who failed could go on if they had the fees, but parents would be hesitant to supply them. Moreover, presence in an Harambee itself was an indication of failure at a lower level, that is, their marks on CPE at the end of primary school were not adequate to gain entrance into a government secondary school.

Each classroom experience carried the stigma of competition because rank ordering based on marks achieved appeared on report forms and were a part of the student's permanent record. If they aspired to further education their records of achievement would follow them, and because of the dearth of facilities only the top few are accepted to go on with further studies.

While the process I instituted could not help them break down the larger workings of the educational system,

perhaps it showed the students an alternative way of thinking about competition and its more destructive aspects. For a few hours a week my students came into a classroom situation without having to be tense or to fear the expectations of an authoritative teacher.

3. Attitude Toward One Another -- When I took over the class and played the "Authority" game at the outset, it was clear that a right answer produced by female members in a recitation exercise caused a low murmur on the part of the males in the class. Females were reluctant to speak while males were ever ready. Communication took place more among males to ensure a right answer than it did among females. The attitude was that of derision on the part of the males toward the females.

In dividing the class into working groups that were sexually mixed, communications were to a certain extent forced. Sub-groups did form at times, but when a problem was just too great then even a female's thoughts were welcome. When I worked individually with a female I at first encountered the same attitude as when the class was all together. However, as time passed and trust was established, the females opened up and really started

realizing their potential. The gleam in their eyes at knowing they could do an exercise well -- the self-satisfaction they at last could experience -- all contributed to the growth of their self-confidence and brought about a more daring attitude by some in working with a group of males. And the males took notice of the change. Females did not become dogmatic about their abilities, but coupled with subtle Akamba charm, females who "knew their stuff" went about imparting what they had learned in a most remarkable manner. Males took note of females -- and not purely to a cognitive end, although that was the beginning point for the new recognition.

4. Task Orientation -- Because both the formal and informal competitive processes once prevailed in the classroom, it was more important to score points on the competitive curve than to actually get the work done. Oftentimes assignments would not be taken seriously because their relevance to the KJSE could not be readily seen. At this point work for KJSE was more important than any rank ordering and the greater competitive process set by the Ministry of Education took precedence over that of the classroom. A duplication of effort by

each person made both the students' and my task very great because in no way could we focus our attention on the learning of a point. Though the understanding of all the points involved was the road to take to pass the exam, understanding was elusive because fear of the exam loomed larger.

By working in teams on specific grammar points, using parts of KJSE exams as exercises, students were forced to focus on the points. The social setting of the group also allowed students to share their feelings, albeit sometimes on a very superficial level, and enabled them to help overcome their fears to get at the task at hand. Time was not wasted in getting down to work. Each student knew his responsibilities and there was no sitting back to daydream as there was always another exercise to be done. And since most of the exercises were part of former exams, students saw the value in getting on with the task.

In general, then, we can say the individualization process reduced the competitive atmosphere and neutralized it further along the continuum to cooperation. Visible results were achieved in output and a greater understanding

was reached by members of the class, especially females, because students did not have to deal with the fears attached to the formal role of schooling nor did they have to confront cultural issues that ran as the undercurrent of interaction.

VII. CONCLUSION

We have explored the historical and sociological development of the Akamba tribe from its acephalous character experienced prior to the arrival of colonists and missionaries to its volatile state of transition wherein age is no longer the criteria for being a leader of the community but education is. We have discussed the effects of missionary education on changing social patterns of interaction and education. Where cooperation was once the underlying pattern, competition is now the force which motivates the society to movement. Where once a network of affectivity was the environment in which children became the productive members of a cohesive society, the practice of formal education within a compound of a school run by strangers has produced alienation to learning and a submissiveness to

authority that is unquestioning.

One of the manifold purposes of this paper in describing my personal solution to the learning problems I found in Form II North was to try to resolve some of these changes which have produced negative, defensive learning. By dividing the class into groups, I had hoped to break down cultural barriers between males and females originally instituted by the formal educational system. By taking the females out of a competitive milieu, I had hoped to help them realize a greater degree of their potential. And by supplying a steady stream of work related to that which the students would have had to master for the passing of KJSE, I had hoped to allay their fears of the exam by showing them they had really mastered many of the cognitive fields appearing on the exam. And by doing all this in a way that each student knew I was personally available to them to help them individually in their learning processes, I had hoped to restore some of the affective network of learning once present in the traditional Akamba educational system.

Did I succeed in reaching my objectives? In a small

way I think I have. If the scope of competition I found in the classroom were limited, my successes would have been greater. But the school functions under a department of government that in itself is a part of a highly authoritarian, competitive society where some are denigrated in favor of others and thereby some are "winners" and the others "losers". Perhaps my success rate was limited because the school cannot be looked at in a vacuum; it is a part of a larger system whose values and norms run more in the direction that western societies have chosen to follow.

And this brings me to my original question about educational systems and the ability of a formerly-colonized country to sift through all the imported, out-dated educational practices as well as through traditional educational systems to see if there isn't some synthesis that would better reflect the educational needs of society now. Clearly, the educational system is a reflection of the superimposed rules of order set upon the society as a whole during the colonial era and which it is still fighting to get out from under.

Whether practices in the classroom can affect the

society, or whether the actions of the society affect classroom experience begs the "chicken or the egg" controversy. Without trying to resolve that issue, as teachers we must keep in mind the welfare of our students and we must pose ourselves the question -- are we doing the best possible job we can? If a teacher who stands in the front of the class and lectures can answer that question affirmatively and mean it, then the job of educating is being done. But perhaps the best population to ask is the students themselves. And perhaps the question had best be reserved until more life experiences have been realized so that in retrospect students can see what they learned and how.

My own answer to my above-posed question is an emphatic "yes". But as a teacher I must stand the test of the passage of time until one day perhaps one of the students of Kathonzweni Harambee Form II North will find him/herself faced with the same dilemma when s/he is teaching and decide on the same course of action I did.

FOOTNOTES

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APPENDIX

RED TEAM--READING COMPREHENSION

KENYA: THE TWO RIFTS

by James Ngugi

I was born and grew up in Kenya. It is a land of hills and valleys; sunshine and rain; dry sand in the north and snow on the mountains; black and white races and a multiplicity of tribes. I have at times looked to the hills and ridges of Central Province and have remembered the Psalm of David:

> I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

The Agikuyu believed that the Lord on High lived in the mountains, his chief dwelling place being Kirinyaga (Mt. Kenya).

But the contrasts that make the worth and beauty of the land are at the same time the basis of conflicts. Contrasts and conflicts; that fairly summarizes the Kenya situation. Kenyatta saw this many years ago when he described Kenya as a land of conflicts. Then he must have been thinking about the tensions between the three main racial groups--Asian, Africa, and European. For these tensions form the major part of Kenya's history during the last sixty years.

The tensions have found expression at the political level. The African has always fought for a better political and economic position in his own country. The Asian has always struggled to achieve political parity with the European. And the European has all the time tried to preserve and perpetuate his dominant political and economic position at the top of the pyramid. Up to 1920, the battle was between the Asian and the European, the subject of the struggle being representation in the Legislative Council, in which the Asian wanted equal representation. He argued that he was a British subject, and was an immigrant just as much as the European. He also argued that he had contributed much to the country's social and economic growth. On the basis of output, had he not, then, a right to political equality? The Asian lost the battle. Then the African came on the scene. He began to organize himself into political parties. Leaders came from among the 'mission boys' who had been educated at the mission schools. Let us be clear about this: the African grievances did not just begin in 1920--in fact they had always been there even before 1900. But he had no way of voicing his complaints and dissatisfaction except through sporadic acts of violence and sabotage. With the emergence of people who could talk the white man's language, the African voice became louder and louder. The African was now a factor in the struggle. The other races were aware of this. The battle then became three-cornered.

It is a credit to the African that he has always sought for constitutional and 'legitimate' means of righting the position. Discussion and compromise had always been the African way of settling disputes. But this was denied to him. Until recently, political parties were not given a chance to work normally. The colonial government, while aware of their existence, shut its ears to their urgent voices. Frustration mounted on frustration. Then one day came the crisis. The Mau Mau War was and will remain a bitter lesson for Kenya.

With the 1960 and 1962 Lancaster House agreements the African was on the way to victory. A large section of the Asian and European populations became reconciled to the independence of Kenya under African rule.

But, and this is thepoint, the conflicts will continue. For the political tensions patterned on race have perpetuated three ways of life that have apparently no meeting ground. The three races have never had a culture contact. They have never really met. They have never known each other, so how do they hope to understand one another?

They must remain strangers in the same land. They must remain sharply divided by a vertical rift. Few have been adventurous and courageous enough to cross the rift and see what is on the other side. The African, and especially the Asian and the European, had each lived in his racial shell.

Even among the Africans, this curse of separate development is seen in tribal conflicts and suspicions, best symbolized by the KANU (Kenya African National Union) and KADU (Kenya African Democratic Union) line-up. Some leaders of KADU were heard to speak of the partition of Kenya into its tribal constituents--a contradiction of what is implied by the name of the party.

In Kenya then, there is really no concept of a nation. One is always a Kikuyu, a Luo, a Nandi, an Asian or a European. I think this diminishes our strength and creative power. To live on the level of race or tribe is to be less than whole. In order to live, a chick has to break the shell shutting it out from the light. Man too must break the shell and be free. Political freedom from foreign rule, essential as it is, is not the freedom. One freedom is essential. This is the freedom for man to develop into his full potential. He cannot do this as long as he is enslaved by certain shackles. Two of these are racism and tribalism. To look from the tribe to a wider concept of human association is to be progressive. When this begins tohappen, a Kenya nation will be born. It will be an association, not of different tribal entities, but of individuals, free to journey to those heights of which they are capable. Nationalism, by breaking some tribal shells, will be a help. But nationalism should not in turn become another shackle. Nor should it be the end. The end should be man ultimately freed from fear, suspicion and parochial attitudes: free to develop and realize his full creative potential.

Kenya is potentially a great country. The contrasts that are the basis of conflicts could be the basis of strenght, beauty andprogress. The different springs in every tribe and race can and should be channelled to flow together in a national stream from which all may draw. In the past, the virtues and energies to be found in different peoples have been used for the political struggle in a society vertically divided into tribal and racial pillars. These good qualities should now be harmonized to work for a national ideal.

In the long run, however, tribalism and even racialism will die. Tribalism cannot withstand for long the rising tide of African nationalism and commercial individualism. And so one looks hopefully to a time in the near future when this vertical rift will vanish. There will then be no conflicting pillars in the same society.

But Kenya, like many other countries in Africa, is faced with another rift: a horizontal rift dividing the elite from the mass of the people. In a sense this rift in society dividing the upper from the lower is a universal one, not solely confined to the emerging nations of Africa. It divides the rich from the poor, the educated from the uneducated. Disraeli saw this rift in nineteenth-century Britain and wrote a about it in his novel The Two Nations.

The situation in the emerging countries is made urgent by the fact that the educated are very few and the great illiterate mass looks up to them for leadership and guidance. The educated, then, have not only political power but economic power as well. The educated have better economic opportunities than the uneducated. Will this class use their political power to entrench their economic position? Julius Nyerere has clearly seen such a possibility. He has warned against a society in which the gap between the 'few haves' and the 'mass of 'have-nots' is too wide. More than this, he has pointed out the danger of the educated class assuming the position formerly held by Europeans. This could divide the nation under formation. This educated few could easily monopolize not only the political and economic power but culture as well. A culture which is the preserve of the top few is not a national culture. It is not a national stream from which all may draw.

There is no clear-cut solution to the problemof these rifts. Any solution must lie with the different individuals that make up Kenya society. The traditional African concept of the community should not be forgotten in our rush for western culture and political institutions, which some regard as the ready-made solution to our problems. In the African way, the community serves the individual. And the individual finds the fullest development of his personality when he is working in and for the community as a whole. Land, food and wealth is for the community. In this community, culture belongs to all. For the rich andpoor, the foolish and the wise are all free to participate in the national life of the community in all its manifestations. Perhaps this is what some have meant when they talk of African socialism. If so, it is a worthy ideal.

I do not propose a solution to such a vast problem. I have said that the solution lies with the people of Kenya. One thing however is necessary in any attempt to eradicate these rifts. People must have that attitude of mind that is not only aware of the problems, but desires a solution. For Kenya a national culture embracing all can be developed. It is what earlier on I called a national ideal, for which in the past the different peoples have not looked. But if the people of Kenya can lift up their eyes unto the hills, and especially to Mt. Kenya, and stretch their wings ready to fly to freedom and life, the shells will break. They will be free.

A dream? One has only to go to Kenya to know. All the people love her soil dearly. This is our common ground. Perhaps the soil, which in the traditional view was always seen as a source of creative life and fertility, will unite them. In this lies the hope of Kenya.

KENYA: THE TWO RIFTS

Question Sheet

I. Vocabulary

A. Read story
B. Choose ten (10) words you do now know; copy them in your exercise book; look them up in a dictionary
C. Put each word in a sentence

II. Comprehension Questions -- Write the correct answer in your exercise book

A. The best title for this essay is:
1. Kikuyu Folk Beliefs
2. Political Equity for Asians
3. Contrasts and Conflicts
4. Racism in Kenya

B. A verse from which book of the Bible is quoted in this essay:
1. Ruth
2. Psalms
3. Song of Solomon
4. Deuteronomy

C. What three cultures does Ngugi refer to:
1. African, Australian, Asian
2. American, English, Algerian
3. European, Andean, Andalusian
4. Asian, European, African

D. Where were the early African leaders educated:
1. European universities
2. Harambee schools
3. Mission schools
4. Government schools

E. What single factor gave Africans a major voice in their struggle for equality:
   1. Knowledge of the English language
   2. Ability to use more sophisticated weapons
   3. Membership in the King's Rifles
   4. The uprising of Mau Mau

F. In the past, what has the configuration of the pyramid of power looked like:

1. Asians
   Europeans
   Africans

2. Asians
   Africans
   Europeans

3. Europeans
   Asians
   Africans

4. Africans
   Asians
   Europeans

G. On what basis did the Asians argue for political equality with the European?

H. For how long has the African been struggling for equality?

I. Which race was dominant in the Legislative Council?

J. What man had foresight in deciding there were rifts in his society?

III. Outline the paragraphs of this essay in a form so that you could rewrite the story using your own words.

IV. Pretend you are an unbiased member of parliament, and that you are giving a speech to your constituency. Write an essay in which you pose a solution to the problem raised by Ngugi in his essay, i.e., cultures represented here in Kenya have never met or known each other, so how do they hope to understand each other. Outline your essay first, and then present your points in essay form.

GREEN TEAM -- Grammar (noun/verb agreement, mass/count nouns, collective nouns)

I. Write each of the following sentences choosing the proper form of verb.

1. The news (was, were) so frightening that everybody in the hall was shocked.
2. The congregation (was, were) well pleased with the excellent sermon.
3. A number of people suffering from malaria (has, have) been admitted to hospital.
4. Over one thousand shillings (has, have) been spent on this product.
5. Last week a hive of bees (was, were) stolen.
6. This class (is, are) the weakest in the school.
7. A team of Emali High School (was, were) playing a team of Kathonzweni Secondary School.
8. A bouquet of flowers (was, were) presented to the guest of honour.

II. Put each of the following sentences into singular form. Be careful to use the singular verb where necessary. Have your neighbour check your answers.

1. She lost some diamonds from her necklace.
2. Our quarrels are due to misunderstandings.
3. Some boys were resting under some mango trees.
4. Some men were waiting to see you.
5. Dreams mean nothing.
6. He is writing some stories for children.
7. Pressure lamps have things like pumps for increasing the air pressure.
8. These little bushes are called crotons.
9. I want to buy some cigarettes.
10. There are some cars for sale.

BLUE TEAM -- Grammar (punctuation, sentence structure)

I. Begin each sentence with the underlined words, being careful to change any other words around in order to make the sentence grammatically correct.

1. I had <u>no sooner</u> fallen asleep than it was time to wake up again.
2. He did <u>not once</u> doubt the wisdom of forcing people to obey him.
3. A chapter on life in the home comes <u>next</u>.
4. The government interferes in local council affairs <u>only</u> in special circumstances.
5. The people of this country have <u>never</u> enjoyed such a high standard of living.
6. A high, flat topped his stands <u>just behind</u> Cape Town.
7. She <u>never once</u> looked up while I was talking to her.
8. Hamlet's father had <u>hardly</u> been buried when his mother married his uncle.
9. An upright stalk called the pistil is <u>in</u> the centre of the flower.
10. The Barbarians <u>not only</u> destroyed the Roman Empire, but they very nearly destroyed civilization in Europe.

II. Insert a full stop where required. Where one is inserted, be careful to capitalize the first word of the new sentence. Also, insert all necessary commas. Copy the passage inserting these two marks of punctuation where required.

he had never been to school because his father needed his help on the farm whenever he saw his friends going off in their school uniforms he felt sad and lonely when they returned home he often asked them about their lessons if he could go to school himself he would soon learn all these things easily as he lay in bed at night he used to dream that school was a kind of heaven where everyone was happy and wise

PURPLE TEAM -- Grammar (idioms, prepositions, adverbials)

I. Fill in the appropriate preposition after having read pages 116-117 in English as a Second Language.

1. He agreed _____ the proposal.
2. She dived _____ the water.
3. My sister is _____ school _____ Nairobi.
4. He sent in a claim _____ damages.
5. The prisoner was released _____ gaol last week.
6. It is an excellent piece _____ work.
7. She opened the door and walked _____ the room.
8. They threw stones _____ him.
9. Meet him _____ the post office _____ ten o'clock.
10. Let us look _____ the matter _____ Friday.

II. Read pages 210-212 in Practical English 3. Then write the following sentences, substituting a phrasal verb for the underlined words.

1. It was hard to <u>see</u> anything on the ground; it was so far below us.
2. Only a fool would <u>reject</u> an offer as generous as that.
3. Don't try to cross the road, or you will be <u>crushed</u>.
4. If you keep pulling the cat's tail, it will <u>attack</u> you.
5. Farming is <u>despised</u> by some people.
6. No amount of money could <u>compensate for</u> the loss of his wife.
7. Mary tried to <u>pretend</u> that I had been unfair to her.
8. Not a word of it was true; he <u>composed</u> it all <u>out of his imagination</u>.
9. Children soon <u>recover from</u> their troubles.
10. This report will have to be <u>investigated</u>.

ORANGE TEAM -- Grammar (verb tense, articles)

I. Insert the correct form of the verb found in brackets.

1. Charles (sit) in his car when he (hear) an explosion.
2. When I (stop) working at night, everybody was (sleep).
3. I (eat) my breakfast while the telephone (ring).
4. We (walk) along the dusty road, when Isaac suddenly (see) a lion.
5. As the mountaineers (climb) a steep hill one of their guides (fall) down.
6. The headmaster (come) into the grounds to see how our team (play).
7. When I first (meet) him, he (work) at the University College.
8. The pupils (read) the comics when the teacher (enter) the classroom.

II. Rewrite the following paragraph beginning with the words "When I met George in 1970, he . . .", changing the tense of the verbs to reflect this time change.

George has just passed his final test and has qualified as an airline pilot. He has been training for two years and has worked hard. He has not failed a single written examination and has done very well in all his flying tests. He has learned to fly five different types of aircraft, including jets. His instructors are proud of him.

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